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August 24, 2001

POLICE CAPTAIN SENTENCED IN DRUG AND COUNTERFEITING CASE

PRESS RELEASE

Orlando, Florida - Friday, August 24, 2001, United States District Judge Anne C. Conway sentenced VICTOR THOMAS, 41, of Ocoee, Florida, on charges that he trafficked in counterfeit merchandise, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 2320, and that he attempted to possess with intent to distribute approximately 18 kilograms of cocaine, in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 846. THOMAS was sentenced to 7 years and 3 months in prison, to be followed by five years of supervised release. THOMAS was an 18 - year Captain and Watch Commander with the Orange County Sheriff's Office at the time of commission of these offenses.

THOMAS pled guilty to these charges on June 8, 2001. He admitted that he assisted two individuals in transporting and storing counterfeit goods, such as clothing, watches, sunglasses, and computer software.

Unbeknownst to THOMAS, the other two individuals were FBI informants, and the FBI was recording and videotaping his meetings and conversations with the two informants. The value of the counterfeit goods that the defendant was responsible for trafficking in was at least \$646,618. THOMAS subsequently agreed to provide security for

the transportation of 18 kilograms of cocaine from Miami to Orlando, Florida, for a fee of \$1,000 per kilogram. On March 1, 2001, he escorted the vehicle containing the "sham" cocaine to Orlando, where it was stored in a mini-warehouse. He was arrested the next day by agents of the FBI, U.S. Customs Service, and the Orange County Sheriff's Office.

This case was investigated by special agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the United States Customs Service, and the Orange County Sheriff's Office and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Cynthia Hawkins Collazo of the Orlando Division of the United States Attorney's Office.

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